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Message Text

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ROME FOR FODAG

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: FAO, AORG

SUBJECT:EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - UN WORLD FOOD COUNCIL

1. NORWEGIAN AMBASSADOR WASHINGTON APPROACHED USDA TO ADVISE THAT NORWAY IS INTERESTED IN HAVING LASSE AASLAND, DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS, NORWEGIAN DEVELOPMENT AGENCY, REPLACE JOHN HANNAH (US) AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL (WFC) WHEN LATTER STEPS DOWN FROM POST LATER THIS YEAR. IT IS OUR IMPRESSION NORWEGIANS MAY ALREADY HAVE APPROACHED SGY WALDHEIM ON THE MATTER BUT WE ARE NOT CERTAIN.
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2. AS MISSION AWARE WE HAVE HELD VIEW THAT, WHILE IT WAS NOT ESSENTIAL TO HAVE AN AMERICAN IN THE WFC SLOT, THE POST SHOULD GO TO A DEVELOPED COUNTRY NATIONAL SINCE TANCO OF THE PHILIPPINES HAS BEEN ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL. FROM THIS STANDPOINT WE WOULD NOT OPPOSE A NORWEGIAN CANDIDATE, BUT THERE NOW ARE OTHER CONSIDERA-

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TIONS.

3. FIRST, THE NORDIC COUNTRIES AS A GROUP ARE IN WHAT MUST BE CONSIDERED AN OVER-REPRESENTED SITUATION LARGELY AS A RESULT OF THE APPOINTMENTS OF HARTLING (DENMARK) TO UNHCR AND REXED (SWEDEN) TO UNFDAC. THUS, IT SEEMS

POSSIBLE THAT WALDHEIM MIGHT BE RELUCTANT TO APPOINT ANOTHER NORDIC TO A HIGH POSITION AT THIS TIME. (RULES PROVIDE FOR APPOINTMENT BY THE SYG, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL AND MEMBERS OF THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL.)

4. SECONDLY, ALTHOUGH THE UNITED STATES CONTINUES TO BE THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL NATION AND LARGEST CONTRIBUTOR OF FOOD AID, ITS REPRESENTATION AT SENIOR LEVELS IN THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS HAS CHANGED SOMEWHAT IN RECENT YEARS. IN THE WFP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POSITION, A CANADIAN HAS REPLACED AN AMERICAN (WITH OUR CONCURRENCE) AND OUR REPRESENTATION IS ONLY AT THE FOURTH LEVEL (D-1) AS OF NOW. (THIS COULD MOVE TO D-2 SOON BUT THIS WOULD BE THE THIRD LEVEL IN A PROGRAM WHERE WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THE LARGEST CONTRIBUTOR.) IN FAO, ALTHOUGH THE DG APPOINTED AN AMERICAN TO THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL POSITION, THE CURRENT DG HAS NOT GIVEN THIS POSITION SUBSTANTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE PAST.
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5. IN THE WFC, WE UNDERSTAND THAT HARRY WALTERS, THE ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MAY ALSO LEAVE HIS POST THIS YEAR. SHOULD AN AMERICAN NOT REPLACE HANNAH OR WALTERS, WE WOULD BE WITHOUT ANY REPRESENTATION IN THE COUNCIL SECRETARIAT. WE ALSO WILL LOSE THE POST OF CHAIRMAN TO THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON FOOD PRODUCTION AND INVESTMENT (CGFPI) WHEN IT IS DISSOLVED LATER THIS YEAR. WE DO HAVE AN AMERICAN IN THE IFAD VICE-PRESIDENT POSITION BUT THE SCOPE OF HIS RESPONSIBILITY REMAINS TO BE DETERMINED.

6. THIS OVERALL LOOK AT THE LEADERSHIP POSITIONS, AND OUR CONCERN THAT THE UNITED STATES MUST CONTINUE TO PLAY A PROMINENT ROLE IN AGRICULTURE AND FOOD AID MATTERS, HAS LED US TO CONCLUDE THAT IT WOULD BE IN OUR INTEREST TO REPLACE HANNAH WITH ANOTHER AMERICAN IF WALDHEIM HAS RESERVATIONS ABOUT APPOINTING THE NORWEGIAN CANDIDATE. WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO SUGGEST WELL-QUALIFIED CANDIDATES FOR WALDHEIM TO CONSIDER AND KNOW FIRSTHAND THAT WFC PRESIDENT TANCO WOULD WELCOME AN AMERICAN AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. WE THINK ANOTHER AMERICAN AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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ALSO WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE WFC ITSELF IN LIGHT OF A NUMBER OF DEVELOPMENTS SINCE THE FIRST AND SECOND COUNCILS; INCLUDING THE ELECTION OF A LDC REPRESENTATIVE AS HEAD OF FAO, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF IFAD WITH AN OPEC PRESIDENT, THE ELECTION OF TANCO, A SUCCESSFUL THIRD WFC AND A GENERAL SETTLING IN OF THE INSTITUTIONS AND CHANGES RECOMMENDED BY THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE.

7. MISSION IS REQUESTED TO SEEK AN EARLY OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS WFC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POSITION WITH SYG. IF HE HAS MADE COMMITMENT TO NORWEGIANS WE WILL SUPPORT BUT IF HE DOES NOT INTEND TO APPOINT THE NORWEGIAN CANDIDATE WE HOPE HE WILL BE WILLING TO CONSIDER WELL-QUALIFIED U.S. CANDIDATES. ONE PERSON WE HAVE IN MIND IS BERNARD
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BELL WHO RETIRED FROM IBRD AS A REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT IN MID 1977. BELL WOULD BE EXCELLENT IN THIS POSITION AND WOULD ACCEPT IF OFFERED. VANCE

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